THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T. R. BAALU): (a) to (d) The report of "Strategic Planning Group" formed for restructuring of the National Oil Industry is being examined by the Government.

Capacity of Mangalore Refinery and Petro-Chemicals Corporation

1367. SHRI AKHILESH DAS: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what is the present capacity of the Mangalore Refineries and Petro-Chemicals Corporation;

(b) whether there is any plan to increase the capacity; if so, to what extent;

(c) whether there is any proposal to place orders with the Joint Sector Refinery Companies; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERTROLEUM & NATURAL GAS (SHRI T. R. BAALU): (a) to (d) The existing capacity of Mangalore Refineries & Petrochemicals (MRPL), a Joint Venture between HPCL and Indian Rayon & Industries Limited, is 3 MMTPA. Government on 21.11.96, has, however, approved expansion of its refining capcity from 3 MMTPA to 9 MMTPA.

Import and Sale Prices of Crude Oil

1368. SHRI RAMJI LAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) at what price the crude oil is being imported and sold by Government; and

(b) whether the import is made directly through the Government of the concerned country or it is imported through other channels?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERTROLEUM & NATURAL GAS (SHRI T. R. BAALU): (a) and (b) IOC is canalising agency for import of crude oil. The crude oil imports are arranged by IOC through long terms contracts with National Oil Companies of various oil producing countries as approved by Government and also through issue of tender enquiries to the parties registered with IOC. Import of crude oil is arranged at market related prices prevailing at the time of loading of respective cargoes. IOC gives this imported crude at its purchase price to the refineries in the country.

Extension of LPG Marketing to the Rural Areas

1369. SHRI AHMED PATEL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that LPG marketing is being extended to rural areas, contiguous to the urban areas; and periodical surveys are being conducted to identify such rural areas; (b) if so,the details thereof;

(c) how many villages have been identified in Gujarat for extending LPG marketing facilities and how many villages have actually been extended the facility, so far; and

(d) how many of such villages are likely to be covered during 1997-98?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERTROLEUM & NATURAL GAS (SHRI T. R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir, As per the latest policy of the Government in order to extend LPG marketing to rural areas, all towns in the country with a population of 10000 and above, offering adequate potential for a commercially viable distributorship after considering the population of adjoining villages withing 15 kms radius, are to be included inthe Marketing Plan under preparation.

(c) and (d) LPG distributorships are at present opened in towns only. In order to extend the facility to the villages, Oil Industry has been advised to identify towns having a population of 10000 and above for opening of LPG distributorships, after consideration of the